

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-5, 10 and 12 are now pending in the application, with Claims 1, 10 and 12 being independent. Claims 2, 6-9, 11 and 13 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 1, 3, 10 and 12 have been amended herein.

Claim 2 was objected to for a minor informality, but has been cancelled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal to the objection to Claim 2 are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-8 and 10-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,318,834 (Otsuka, et al.). Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Otsuka, et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Cleaning operation are often executed when a printhead is attached or an ink tank is attached or exchanged, after a non-printing state continues for a specified time or a specified number of ink dots are discharged, or when a user designates a cleaning request by a key operation or from the printer driver on the host apparatus. With the claimed arrangement, method and program, however, the cleaning operation is inhibited when a

detection result indicates that an ink tank is not attached to the printhead. Accordingly, damage to the printhead by an unnecessary cleaning operation can be suppressed. This can prolong the service life of the apparatus.

Otsuka, et al. relates to an ink jet recording apparatus and method that can detect a cartridge absence time period during which a cartridge is not mounted on the ink jet recording apparatus. When the ink cartridge is mounted, the amount of ink to be suctioned for cleaning is set based on the cartridge absence time period. When detected that the ink tank is not attached, Applicant submits that Otsuka, et al. merely discloses waiting until the tank is attached. There is no disclosure or suggestion of positively inhibiting a cleaning operation. Moreover, as described beginning at column 5, line 61 with regard to the flow chart of Figure 5, Applicant submits that the detection and cleaning operations in Otsuka, et al. are executed when the power ON procedure is performed. It is respectfully submitted that Otsuka, et al. does not disclose or suggest inhibiting a cleaning operation when a detection result indicates that an ink tank is not attached to the printhead and the cleaning operation is intended to be executed, as is recited in independent Claims 1, 10 and 12.

Thus, independent Claims 1, 10 and 12 are patentable over the citation of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the §§ 102 and 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 1, 10 and 12. Dependent Claims 3-5 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mark A. Williamson', is written over a horizontal line.

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